

administration's appetite for Government control of our businesses, it certainly is not intended to prevent routine Government procedures, or to deprive our citizens of their favorite leisure sports. And we have gone out of our way to take care of these concerns.

While the opponents of these bills are likely to continue to try to ruffle the feathers by trying to scare the public, the public's interest would be far better served by imposing moratoriums. It will prevent further regulatory burdens from being added before this Congress can revise current laws, and add common sense to overzealous regulations. That is our goal, common sense.

I think the close-the-Washington-Monument tactics show how little common sense there has been in the regulatory climate. The public understands one point all too clearly: Regulatory reform is an issue we cannot afford to duck.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senator from North Dakota is recognized to speak for up to 15 minutes.

HUNGER

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, the other evening in a meeting in North Dakota with a couple hundred North Dakotans, mostly farmers, I asked to do something different. I asked if those who came to the meeting to participate would spend a little time talking about what is right, what works, which Government programs are good and address real needs in the right way?

It was an interesting exercise. The sport in America, the pastime in our country that consumes the minutes of virtually every town meeting of every Member of Congress, is talking about what is wrong. I understand that. We should figure out what is wrong and make it right. But it is also important to understand that there are a lot of things done in this country that are good, that are worthwhile, that make this country better.

There is, it seems to me, a requirement from time to time for us to stop and think about that. What is it that works? What is worthwhile?

We have in this country today something called a Contract With America, which was offered by the majority party in the House of Representatives. In the last election, when the American people decided who would govern, 20 percent of those who were eligible to vote cast their vote for Republicans, 19 percent of those eligible to vote cast their vote for Democrats. In other words, the Republicans won 20 percent to 19 percent, and 61 percent decided they would not bother to vote at all. That was the score. The 20-to-19 victory produced was called a mandate by some. This 1 percent mandate in the House of Representatives then provided us with something called a Contract With America. The Contract With America has some things in it that I support and some things that we on the

Democratic side of the aisle have brought to the floor of the Senate previously. There are things in it that I think are bipartisan and that will enjoy bipartisan support. There are other things that cause me great concern, which is where I think we are going to be in some public policy aggressive discussions later this year.

We are now discussing the constitutional amendment for a balanced budget on the floor of the Senate. Consuming a substantial amount of time in that debate is the notion that there are some people in this Congress who want to spend a lot of money and there are others who are conservative that do not.

Something happened last week that once again belies that general notion. In the House of Representatives, the majority party, the conservatives, the ones who push the Contract With America, said they wanted to add \$600 million in defense spending to a bill. The Secretary of Defense said, "No, we do not want that. We do not need that. We do not support that." The conservatives said, "No, no, no, we insist. We want \$600 million more for you to spend."

The question is, Who is conservative and who is liberal? We have conservatives saying the Defense Department should be given more money than they want or need because that is where they want to spend money. Where did they get it? They said, "We will not increase the deficit. We will take the money that's in an account for improvements for schools in low-income neighborhoods and we will use that to give the Defense Department money it says it does not need. We will cut job training for disadvantaged youth in order to give the Defense Department money the Defense Department says it does not want." This coming from conservatives.

So, who is a liberal and who is a conservative? Who are the big spenders? Are the big spenders people who want to stuff another \$600 million over to the Pentagon when the people who run the Pentagon say, "We do not want it, we do not need it, we did not ask for it, do not give it to us?"

I take from this lesson the general notion that is there is really not a plugged nickel's worth of difference between Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals, in their appetite for spending money. Everyone wants to spend resources. The question is, on what? One wants to build star wars, another wants a feeding program for children. But both want to spend money.

I think a century from now one will be able to look back at this society, at this country, at this group of people and make a reasonably good judgment about who we were and what we were about and what kind of people we were by how we decided to spend public resources.

One will be able to look at the Federal budget 100 years from now and de-

cide: Here is what the American people felt. Here is what they thought was important in the year 1995, because the Federal priorities on spending, the priorities of the Federal and State governments and the other uses of public funds establishes what our country and its people thought was important.

There are some things in this country that are of national importance, that we have decided were important over 20 and 50 years. I have worked on one of these issues a great deal for many, many years. It is that issue—hunger—which persuaded me to come to the floor for just a couple of minutes today. I have traveled to refugee camps around the world. I chaired a task force on hunger with the chair of the Hunger Committee, the late Mickey Leland, when I was a Member of the House of Representatives. We have the winds of hunger blowing every day in every way in every country around the world—killing 40,000 to 45,000 people a day, most of them children. And yet it is not a headline anywhere. It is just a persistent, chronic problem that imposes massive suffering on millions and millions of people. Hunger is not some mysterious disease for which we do not have a cure. We know what causes it. We know what cures it. Hunger is a very serious problem, and there is a national responsibility and a national requirement to respond to it.

The national priority to respond to hunger has been manifested in things like the school hot lunch program, the WIC program, the Food Stamp Program, a whole range of programs that invest in those who find themselves with the misfortune of being poor and hungry, particularly in young people.

We are told now in the Contract With America that the new way to respond to these issues is through block grants. Substantially cut the total amount of money for a number of programs, especially programs that affect the poor, the vulnerable, and the hungry. Substantially cut the money in the aggregate, roll it into one block grant, move it back to the States, and say to the States, "Use it as you wish. Address these problems as you will. It is your choice." Presumably, the State governments are more efficient and more effective than the Federal Government.

I will admit that there are many areas where the delivery of services by State governments can be more efficient and more effective. I also would say that, just because people talk about wanting to create block grants and use them as the device to save money, this does not in any way obliterate urgent national needs. Hunger and poverty are among those urgent national needs.

Block grants will create a system, to ask the poor and the most vulnerable—and, unfortunately, especially the hungry and the children—to compete against a range of other urgent needs because, if we say we are going to roll all of these programs into a block

grant, there then is no national priority that says we are going to feed hungry kids. It becomes a decision by 50 different States about how much money they have to feed hungry kids versus the needs of all of other interests that are at their doorsteps asking for funds. Block grants themselves are not, in my judgment, the answer.

Yes, we use block grants from time to time, and, yes, they can be effective in some cases. But, frankly, I am pretty unimpressed with some of these new Governors who are busy cutting taxes at the State level and puffing out their chests, walking around holding their suspenders, and boasting about what a great job they are doing cutting taxes back at home. Then they come here and walk through these doors with a tin cup asking if they can have money, no strings attached, in the form of block grants which eliminate the kind of things we have targeted as national needs, things that effectively respond to hunger in children. If they can get their hands on that money with no strings attached, then they have the resources to respond to the problems they have caused by their own tax cuts. I say, if they want resources, let them raise them.

If you want to cause maximum waste in government, just decide to create a government in which you disconnect where you raise money from where you spend it. Decide to raise it here and spend it there, I guarantee you it will be free money in the eyes of those who spend it. You can look at program after program for examples. Go back to the Law Enforcement Assistance Act (LEAA) and ask yourselves if some of the most egregious wastes of Federal money did not occur under its block grants. I have some specific examples I could use, but I will do that at a later time.

The point I want to make today is that it might be out of fashion to be poor. It might be out of fashion to be hungry. There may not be a lot of high-paid lobbyists around supporting the interests of the hungry, but that does not mean that they are not people with compelling needs, and that does not mean that we do not have a responsibility as a nation to respond to their needs.

The young boy named David Bright came to Congress one day. He was 10 years old, living with his mother and a brother and a sister in a homeless shelter in New York, lost, troubled, living in squalid poverty. He talked about the rats in the shelters. Then he said something I have never forgotten. He said, "No 10-year-old boy like me should have to put his head down on his desk at school in the afternoon because it hurts to be hungry." No 10-year-old boy should have to put his head down on his desk at school in the afternoon because it hurts to be hungry.

If anyone in this Chamber or in the House Chamber or elsewhere can look in the eyes of 10-year-old kids who are hungry because their family does not

have enough money to buy groceries, their family does not have a home, their family does not have enough to eat and say that there is not a national need, not an urgent priority, you do not rank up here, you go down and compete someplace for some block grant that we gave to a Governor who talks about cutting taxes back home, then this is a debate I am anxious to have on this floor.

We need to debate what our national priorities are. Yes, we need incentives to tell people who are down and out, "Here is a stepladder to get up and going again." We need incentives to say, "You go from welfare to work." We need all of those things. I will be one supporting others on this floor who say, "Let us change the welfare system." But I will not be part and parcel of that discussion and decide, as some have, that this is a kind of a survival-of-the-fittest society where, if you are poor, you do not matter, and if you are a kid who is hungry, you are not a national need.

When I see what happens over in the House, where they say, "We are conservatives. We think that the Government wastes too much money, and so here is 600 million bucks we want to stick into the Pentagon," and the Pentagon says, "We do not want it and we do not need it and please do not give it to us," and the House says, "Sorry, but we are going to give it to you anyway, and we will take the money from a program that helps poor kids," then I think something is wrong with the thinking around here. That's why I hope we can have legislation and substantial debate about what this Nation's urgent needs and priorities are.

As we do that, I at least hope all of us will understand this country's kids deserve to have a prominent place in the array of national needs that this Congress decides to establish. We have spent a long time looking at this country's problems and trying to address them. No one here, I think, has decided to do that in any other manner but with good will and with their best judgment. We have made some mistakes along the way. There is no question about that. But we have also done some good things, and I would hate very much to see this wave of emotion about the Contract With America sweep out the door with some of the inefficient things that we certainly should change a set of good programs and a set of urgent national priorities that respond to the interests of the most vulnerable in this country, our children.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Arizona.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized to speak for 10 minutes as if in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, before I begin the substance of my remarks, I would like to comment briefly on the comments of the Senator from North Dakota. In case he missed an election last November 8, the American people want to do things differently from what was just espoused by the Senator from North Dakota. It is not old fashioned to want to have a change in the way that we address the problems affecting America. It is not old fashioned to recognize that the programs so greatly espoused and seeking to be continued by the Senator from North Dakota have failed.

I would urge him to consider the words of our new Congressman from Oklahoma, Congressman J.C. WATTS, Jr., who said, "We don't measure compassion by the number of people who are on welfare. We measure compassion by the number of people we can get over the welfare."

The spirited defense of the status quo and business as usual just articulated by the Senator from North Dakota is ample evidence to me that he has not gotten the message of November 8 as the American people want things done differently, not business as usual. I believe that, if the Senator in North Dakota would check around, he would find that the overwhelming majority of Americans want the Contract With America passed.

They want the Contract With America because they lost confidence in the way that the Senator from North Dakota and the leadership on the other side of the aisle was running America. They are totally dissatisfied. They want change. They are going to get change. I am proud of the job that is being done by my colleagues in the House and the courage that they are showing in taking on some sacred cows.

If the Senator from North Dakota thinks this old line about being cruel to poor people and depriving food from people's mouths is going to work, my message to him is, it "ain't" going to work.

I also look forward to a spirited debate and discussion with him because we have to find new ways to attack old problems, rather than going back to the old ways of spending more money on programs that have failed to fulfill our obligation to those in our society.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. McCAIN. I only have 10 minutes. I will be glad to yield to the Senator from North Dakota at the expiration of my time, if I have any remaining.

THE BASE CLOSING COMMISSION

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I am deeply concerned about the fact that there will not be, I am told by the leadership, a vote on the nominees for the Base Closing Commission today.

The fact is, on February 28, the Secretary of Defense will file for the Federal Register a list of bases that the